From: Alex.Christ@colorspan.com@inetgw
To: Microsoft ATR
Date: 11/20/01 1:00pm
Subject: Microsoft settlement opinion

I would just like to voice my opinion on the Microsoft case.

I would like for Microsoft to give up control of the operating systems
that are placed on a hard drive by the original equipment manufacturer
(OEM). OEM's should be allowed to ship Intel-based hardware without an
operating system, or install another OS if a customer requests it and the
OEM sells it. I have purchased a number of computers from IBM, Dell and HP
and all "MUST" ship with Windows (Gateway even told me I have to purchase
Microsoft Office or another Microsoft product in order to purchase a
computer. I did not buy from Gateway). I use FreeBSD (UNIX) and used BeOS
(they are now defunct because they were not able to gain marketshare on PC
hardware), so I pay Microsoft for software licenses I do not use
(generally $99 for Win98 and $199 for WinNT... those were the prices for
OEMs when I purchased the computers about five years ago).

Perhaps the easiest way to eliminate or minimize OS-monopoly control for
any software manufacturer is not to allow OEM licenses with hardware
vendors. If a customer requests Windows XP, the OEM must sell a full
retail version of the OS (at retail cost) with the hardware. If a customer
requests Linux, the OEM sells a retail version of Linux. BeOS... retail
version. This would eliminate the control because now the
customer/consumer demands what OS they want to use. Microsoft would have
to be more competative. Think about it, most Linux and Unix distributions
are $49 to $79 at CompUSA. WindowsME is about $99 - $120 and Windows2000
is about $199 - $299. Microsoft would be forced to play at the Linux/Unix
prices since they view them as the main competitors.

In short, don't allow OEM relationships between OS manufacturers and
hardware vendors. The only way around this would be for the OS
manufacturer to become a hardware manufacturer too (i.e. Apple Computer,
Silicon Graphics, Sun Microsystems, IBM, etc. - none of which have a
monopoly).

Thanks,

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